

SCPD EMPLOYMENT FIRST OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
JUNE 13, 2017
SMYRNA REST AREA, SMYRNA

Present: Marissa Catalon, Vice-Chair, DDDS; Andrea Guest (phone), DOL/DVR; Ron Sarg, DCVA; Lloyd Schmitz, Council on Blind/SCPD; Laura Strmel, SJCS-DE; Laura Waterland, DLP; John McNeal, SCPD; and Amber Rivard, Support Staff.

Guest: Dr. David Mank (phone), Disability and Community Inclusion at Indiana University

CALL TO ORDER/Introductions/Approval of February/April/May Minutes

Marissa called the meeting to order at 9:37 am. Everyone introduced themselves. John introduced himself to the Commission as the new Administrator for the State Council for Persons with Disabilities. He stated that he wants to assist the Commission in meaningful conversation and ensuring that there is proper representation of Commission members and designees. There was no quorum to approve the February, April and May minutes. Laura Waterland commented on the draft minutes from February 14, 2017. Under the legislative standards on page 4 that paragraph is the same as in April 11, 2017 draft minutes. The conversation was for any comments to outside parties should not be in the body of the draft. Andrea stated on the May 9, 2017 draft minutes that “recommendations” should be switched to “suggested”. Topics were only discussed under the Conversation with Dr. Mank in the May draft minutes. Clarifications will be made at the next meeting concerning the draft minutes.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

BUSINESS

Follow-Up to Dr. Mank’s Visit

Dr. Mank provided additional information from his visit to Delaware. He stated that during the conversation with the Commission and the visit to Kent-Sussex Industries (KSI) that one result was that the Commission invest in building capacity to deliver better integrated employment. KSI is progressing down the path of how their organization will be different years from now compared to what it is currently as they continue with personnel care planning and other programs. He spoke about the discussion and analysis the Commission had around the Sub-minimum Wage Legislation. Dr. Mank restated his question from the May meeting for the Commission to focus less on eliminating 14c and more on making it unnecessary by building capacity from the Commission’s provider organizations to deliver employment.

Marissa spoke about continuing discussion on the draft policy document from the May meeting is continually updated. There was also discussion on not just communicating with local legislators, but the federal delegation, and that the Commission draft a letter in support of the federal delegations. She added that this could be an opportunity for the Commission to discuss what should be communicated to the federal delegation. She suggested adding bullet points to

the draft policy document letter. She added that Dr. Mank had agreed to assist in drafting the letter to the legislators on recommendations from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) group. The draft letter should include more specific details that are important to Delaware and topics the Commission could begin to work on as priority (i.e. capacity building activities and alternatives from traditional employment services). Lloyd asked if the comments that will be included in the draft policy would be related to the Employment First Leadership Mentoring Program (EFLMP) that is being abolished by the federal delegation and will there be a replacement to assist Delaware in achieving goals. Laura Strmel stated that she was not aware they were abolishing EFLMP as of June 23, 2017.

Marissa commented that the EFLMP is federally funded and three of the legislators are in support of employment services for individuals with disabilities. Dr. Mank added that timing matters in discussions with the legislators and when to present them with suggestions. The Commission should present at a later date this discussion with the legislators due to the current focus on Medicaid expansions. Marissa commented that PATHWAYS was a Medicaid expansion program and any significant changes to the funds could impact the way services are provided. Dr. Mank stated that the Commission should remind legislators that Medicaid is about more than healthcare and that it involves employment services for people with disabilities. Andrea asked if the legislators are going to get rid of expansion programs. Marissa commented that in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) they allowed for some medical expansion programs. If ACA is repealed, it could affect Medicaid expansion programs. John agreed that the Commission should contact legislators to give examples on how the Medicaid expansion cuts affect employment services for people with disabilities and that it ties into their health. He added that his recommendation to the legislators is to increase Medicaid costs for people with disabilities.

Lloyd suggested that someone start drafting the letter and send it to all Commission members to provide add-ons. John stated it is a challenge due to lack of a quorum, however it would not prohibit a member from the Commission from drafting the letter. He suggested that each of the agencies or representative groups could endorse it. Andrea asked for clarification on what is the priority of the Commission. She added that their focus should not be on the federal viewpoint, and there is limited impact on what they can do. Laura Strmel suggested focusing on one topic with the Commission that is "at-risk". John stated the current main focus for legislation is on Medicaid. He stated they should gather anonymous information in the form of a survey from State employees (including one with a disability) that need Medicaid and stress the importance on not cutting Medicaid. Ron stated that an issue is that the State budget is June 30th and federal legislators will be out of legislation beginning the middle of July. The most meaningful impact the Commission can do now is at the State level by spreading their viewpoint to legislators. Dr. Mank stated that he wants to provide input on languages the Commission will develop in the draft letter.

John agreed with Lloyd about drafting the letter and sending it to all the Commission members to ask for their input, but the Commission should have a quorum to progress. Lloyd commented the draft letter could be discussed at the July meeting. The Commission members discussed if they should have the letter be addressed to the State legislators or federal delegation due to the concern being both at State and federal levels. A Commission member suggested they contact Representative Heffernan or Lt Governor Bethany Hall-Long to attend a meeting to discuss the

letter. Clarification was given on the letter being from the Commission stating their concerns of what will happen if there are cuts to Medicaid programs. Laura Strmel suggested the Commission focus on three impacts that changes Medicaid or other funding that would be inputted in the Employment First Initiative to shape the letter and the effect it has on individuals with disabilities seeking equal competitive employment. John volunteered to assist with guidance as to what the Commission wants in the draft letter. Marissa stated that without a quorum, there will be discussion on the importance of Medicaid funding for individuals with disabilities in employment.

There was discussion for the draft letter to be written from a personal viewpoint (i.e. examples) and the timeframe (due date) to send the letter. Andrea suggested one of the examples could be from a Project SEARCH site in which Christiana Care have young individuals with significant disabilities (most are DDDS recipients) and they have the highest percentage of hiring individuals into the hospital setting to pay for Medicaid costs. Laura Strmel commented that the Commission should remind legislators of how much the cuts and Medicaid expansion affect the physical impacts. Ron suggested also that the Commission be proactive and encourage Lt Governor Bethany Hall-Long to attend a meeting to discuss more on the budget.

John stated that if Lt Governor Bethany Hall-Long attends a meeting, the Commission should have a quorum. Laura Waterland reviewed the EFOC membership in page three of House Bill 319. Four of the members should be a person with a disability (not working for State employment) and are appointed by the following: Speaker of the House of Representatives- Unknown, Minority Leader of the House of Representatives- Ron Sarg, President Pro Tempore of the Senate- Lloyd and Minority Leader of the Senate- Unknown. Nick Fina has resigned from the Commission and another member should be appointed by the Chair of State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) that is not a State employee and is experienced with employment service programs. The Commission membership also should include those appointed by the Secretary of Labor a representative of the Division of Industrial Affairs (DIA) - Unknown, representative of DVR- Andrea Guest, Secretary of Education or a designee- Dale Matusevich, Secretary of Health and Social Services or a designee- Dan Madrid, Director of DDDS- Marissa Catalon or a designee, and Chair of DDC or a designee- Pat Maichle. John stated that the Commission spread the word through Facebook about the Commission needing members who have a disability and is not a State employee. There were suggestions of individuals with a disability that could become official members (Kathleen McCool and Sonya Dyer for SCPD). There was a suggestion for the Commission to have additional membership extended towards other agencies such as a veteran with a disability that the budget cuts also affects.

July Election

Elections will be held in July for electing a new Chair of the Commission.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

John requested that the Commission, Committees, membership and leadership to be committed with agenda items for future meetings.

A Commission member suggested that Andrea should update the Commission on what is being done with Section 511 WIOA concerning sheltered workshops. Marissa commented the discussion with DVR staff provided positive feedback from career counseling. Individuals have shown interest in pre-vocational services and wanting to obtain sub-minimum wage. The increase of individuals wanting to participate in the services provided have increased the referrals and not enough DVR staff. Andrea confirmed that she will have an update of Section 511 WIOA at the next Commission meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Laura Strmel asked if the Commission is continuing with the draft sub-minimum Wage legislation with Representative Heffernan. Marissa clarified that the Commission is not drafting the legislation, but will provide input analysis on sub-minimum wage.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 11:27 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Rivard
Administrative Specialist